

**WICKEN PARISH COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING HELD  
AT 19.30 HRS ON TUESDAY 12<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2021  
VIA SKYPE**

In Attendance (a minimum of 3 Councillors must be present for business to be conducted): Cllrs E Houghton (Chair), J Day, C Bye, M Hawes, S Wilson, J Rogers, P Rash, M Smith and L Tory. One member of the public was present.

**1. Apologies for absence and any declarations of interest.**

Apologies were received and accepted from County Councillor Hunt and District Councillor D Schumann.

There were no declarations of interest with any item on the agenda.

**2. Public Participation. The meeting will be adjourned for up to 10 minutes to allow members of the public and Councillors who have declared an interest to make a statement on matters to be discussed. The Chair advised speakers that by speaking their names and what they raise will be minuted and be in the public domain.**

There were no requests to speak.

**3. Minutes of the Last Meeting Held on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and correct copy and would be signed by the Chair.

**4. Presentation Regarding the Rural Gigabit Scheme**

Sarah Marsh from Connecting Cambridgeshire attended the meeting and presented on the Rural Gigabit Scheme. This is a scheme to provide vouchers to residents to help cover the cost of bringing fibre to the property rather than to the green boxes and to enable the resident to receive 100mbs. Some properties in the parish including Upware, Stretham Road, Lode Lane and Padney had already been connected through Connecting Cambridgeshire. Although the current scheme only ran to March 2021, the Government had advised that there is a strong possibility that future schemes will run. The Parish Council asked Sarah Marsh to obtain a quote for fibre to the property for all properties in Wicken. This will be put on the agenda once the information had been received.

Sarah Marsh left the meeting at 8.05pm

**5.1 Variation of condition 1 (Approved plans) of previously approved 17/02205/FUL for Development of a 49.9MW battery storage facility, bridge and associated infrastructure. Land North West of Electricity Sub-Station Weirs Drove Burwell. Ref 20/01645/VAR**

Although in Burwell Parish, ECDC had confirmed that all local Parish Councils had been included in the consultation. The council had no objections.

Draft minutes not yet accepted

**5.2 One 4 bedroom replacement dwelling house and one 4 bedroom new house, semi-detached. 29 Chapel Lane, Wicken CB7 5XZ. Ref 20/01689/FUL**

The Parish Council felt that the mass and bulk of the properties would dominate the vista in this open area of the village and would have an effect on the street scene. The Parish Council would prefer to see the two bungalows which already have planning permission.

The Parish Council would like a condition applied for the owners to maintain the ditch on the eastern side of the plot as this ditch is important in the drainage system of the village.

**5.3 Reserved matters of Access, Appearance, Landscaping, Layout & Scale of planning application 17/019475/OUT for residential development for 6no. new dwellings. Land adjacent to 14 Church Road, Wicken. Ref 20/01393/RMA**

The council had no objections.

**5.4 T1 Yew – Fell to ground level as recommended in report. 5 Chapel Lane, Wicken CB7 5XZ. Ref 20/01760/TRE**

The council had no objections.

**5.5 Proposed erection of garage/games room and first floor gymnasium. Orwell Farm 35 High Street, Wicken. Ref 20/01734/FUL**

The Parish Council would like a condition added that a planning application must be submitted if the owner wishes to use as a living dwelling in the future.

**5.4 Update on Planning Applications Granted**

The following have been granted by ECDC:

- Approval of details of reserved matters for Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and scale of previously approved 16/01492/OUT. Land South of Chapel Lane, Wicken. Ref 20/00499/RMA
- To vary conditions 1(Approved Plans) a 7 (Highways Works) of previously approved 16/01492/OUT for the erection of up to 8 dwellings. Land South of Chapel Lane Wicken, Ref 20/00709/VAR
- T1 Ash fell due to location and crown growing through phone lines. T2 apple fell to allow more space in garden. 1 High Street, Wicken. Ref 20/01535/TRE

The appeal to the Planning Inspectorate Ref APP/V0510/D/20/3259732 1 Lower Road Wicken had been dismissed.

**6. Hawes Lane Affordable Housing Scheme**

The prices of the affordable housing in Hawes Lane had been released and the Parish Council were extremely disappointed to see the price. The Parish Council felt that these were overpriced taking into account the land having been sold at a reduced rate to allow for affordable housing and the price of similar houses in the village. The Chair had challenged the Housing Association on the cost. It was felt that the response was inadequate. The Chair will formally email the Housing Association to reinforce the disappointment and ask this to be escalated. This will be copied to District Councillors Schumann and Bovingdon.

Draft minutes not yet accepted

## **6. County and District Councillor reports**

There were no County or District Councillors present at the meeting.

### **7. Progress report on matters arising from the last meeting 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

- 7.1** Cycle path – Cllr Smith was ready to start work once the weather improved.
- 7.2** Maids Head sign – the hole had not yet been made good. The clerk will give notice to Mr Murfitt that the hole will be filled in with concrete and smoothed off. Cllr Smith will complete the work after two weeks of Mr Murfitt and the pub landlords being notified.
- 7.3** Mortuary Chapel and Cemetery Paths – Work is nearly complete on the Mortuary Chapel.
- 7.4** Purchase of rubbish bin for the Rec. – The new bin has been delivered. Cllr Smith will install.
- 7.5** Non-payment of invoices by National Trust – The National Trust still owes the October invoice for the 2020/21 rent.
- 7.6** Upware Open Space – The hedges and trees had been planted. The clerk is awaiting the quote from Truelink for seeding with grass. The Council thanked Cllr Day for the work completed on levelling the land. Cllr Smith will reinstate the ditch at the front of the land.
- 7.7** Deed of Easement 26 High Street Wicken – The Deed of Easement was with the solicitor.
- 7.8** Picnic benches at the Maids head – The picnic benches had not yet been moved.
- 7.9** Parish trees – The guelder-rose had not yet been transferred to the Recreation Ground.
- 7.10** High Fen Drove padlocked gate – The clerk will take photos of the locked gate and report.
- 7.11** Highways issues – The clerk had reported the boundary issue with Cannon House, Upware and large vehicles using Redit Lane, Wicken to Highways.
- 7.12** Downgrade of A1123 to a B road – County Cllr Hunt had been successful in having the motion passed at full council to downgrade the A1123 to a B road.
- 7.13** Anglian Water – The clerk and Cllr Rash had attended a meeting with Anglian Water and District Cllrs Schumann and Bovingdon before Christmas to discuss the water supply in Wicken. AWA have confirmed that work will commence in April 2021 to provide a second supply to Wicken via Stretham. This will be used when there is a problem with the pipe across Soham Mere and will ensure the village does not have outages like the problem experienced on Christmas/Boxing Day. The Parish Council would like to record their grateful thanks to Cllr Schumann for escalating this problem and for achieving this outcome.

## **8. Financial matters.**

## 8.1 Bill payments

Rachel Earl*	Clerk wages January 2021	£446.16
HMRC PAYE*	PAYE November 2020	£111.60
Balfour Beatty	Maintenance contract	£138.00
SLCC	Full Membership	£112.00
Haine Tree Services**	Remove of leylandii and grind out stumps This will be paid from the Upware Open Space ring fenced funds.	£300.00
NALC	Local Councils Award Scheme registration fee	£60.00
Wicken Mission Hall	Hire of hall from October 2020 meeting	£24.00
Cambridgeshire Search and Rescue	Replacement cheque. Cheque 102541 lost in post	£100.00
SSE	Streetlight electric December 2020	£122.19
British Gas	Electric for changing rooms 11/11/20-11/12/20	£16.55
British Gas***	Electric for changing rooms 11/7/20-9/1/21 Credit note for electric 11/7/20-11/12/20	£114.45 £82.54 Diff £37.63

\*This included the backdated pay rise awarded in December 2020.

\*\* This will be paid form the ringfenced money for the Upware Open Space

\*\*\* Bills from 11/7/20 had been estimated. Actual reading submitted and difference calculated.

## 10. Grass Cutting Tender

References had been obtained from 4 Parish Councils regarding CGM and these will be retained with the tender documents. The clerk had contacted CGM who had agreed a one-year contract which could be extended to three years depending on the quality of the work. Truelink had agreed to hold the 2020 price. The Parish Council were required by the financial regulations to obtain best value.

	Grass cutting	Verges
CGM Ltd	£3525	£600
Truelink	£4625.70	£1162.80

The Parish Council therefore agreed to move the contract to CGM for one year to be reviewed in December 2021. This was proposed by Cllr Bye and seconded by Cllr Wilson. All were in favour. The Parish Council would like to thank Truelink for their excellent service.

## 11. Precept 2021/22

The current precept stood at £26k. The following had been included in the cost of the 2021/22 precept:

- Slubbing of the village pond
- Possible need to move to a platform that required payment should the need for online meetings continue.
- Annual and general increases in regular costs and expenses.

Draft minutes not yet accepted

The increase of the precept to £29k was proposed by Cllr Houghton and seconded by Cllr Rogers. All were in favour.

## **12. Village Clean Up**

Cllr Rash proposed and discussed a new style of village clean up for 2021. This would involve asking residents to offer to clear an area of the village when they are completing their exercise. The clerk will check the COVID health and safety rules. If this is allowed the clerk would put a map of the village on Facebook inviting residents to choose an area.

## **13. Policies**

**13.1 Retention of Documents (renew)**

**13.2 Safeguarding Policy (renew)**

**13.3 Equality and Diversity Policy (renew)**

**13.4 Information and Data Protection (renew)**

**13.5 Facebook Users Policy (full approval)**

**13.6 Equal Opportunities (new)**

**13.7 Recruitment Policy and Procedure (new)**

**13.8 Health and Safety Policy (new)**

**13.9 Grievance Policy (new)**

**13.10 Disciplinary Policy (new)**

**13.11 Complaints Policy (new)**

**13.12 Publication Scheme (new)**

The Parish Council agreed to renew/approve all of the above policies.

## **14. Items for Information**

Cllr Houghton reported that reflector posts have been placed down Lode Lane by a resident with the permission of Highways. Highways had provided the reflector posts.

Some fallen branches have been collected on the Mission Hall Green. Cllr Day agreed to move these.

Cllr Houghton advised that the Around and About newsletter has not yet been circulated due to Burwell Print being closed. It had been suggested by the editor of the Around and About that the newsletter was circulated in April and September. The funds of the Around and About were now held in the Parish Council account ringfenced for future village publications.

Cllr Rash advised that the streetlight in Butts Lane had been on during the day. The clerk will report. Cllr Rash would like the village to be a "dogs on leads" area. This will be on the next agenda for discussion.

Cllr Tory reported that a portaloo had been on the EA carpark in Upware for a number of months. The clerk will contact the EA.

There was no further items of information and the meeting closed at 21.15.